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*Journal of a Mission from the Supreme Government of India to  
the Court of Siam.—By DR. RICHARDSON.*<sup>1</sup>

*February 10th.*—Being Sunday, I had little communication with any one. In the evening Coon-Sit paid us a second visit, accompanied by Radsithee; he is the son of the Pra-Choolia, who is chief of the natives of the Coromandel Coast settled here, and from whom Mr. Crawford and Colonel Burney received all the annoyance and opposition in his power; he is descended from the natives of the other side of the Bay, and retains his dress and religion. Mr. Hunter called this morning on the Praklang, where he met his brother Pya-si-pi-pat, and some other of the officers who have been ordered to sail with a reinforcement of about 7000 men, (of which Pya-si-pi-pat is the generalissimo) to assist the Rajah of Ligore, against the Malays of Queda. Out of all the royal war vessels, not one was fit to put to sea, being destroyed by white-ants and other causes. They are ordered to start immediately, and are afraid to tell the king the state of the navy; they were consequently at their wits' end for ways and means, besides there being an evident disinclination for the service. The Puttanee people have joined the insurgents, and it is expected they will attack Sangora, which still holds firm its allegiance. The proper heir to the throne of Siam, the late king's eldest legitimate son, who entered the priesthood when

<sup>1</sup> Continued from p. 30. vol. ix.

the present king (who is a natural son) took possession of the throne, hearing that I spoke Burman, sent a message to the Praklang, that he wished to see me, as he also has a knowledge of that language. I have not heard whether his request was granted. The king has for some time wished this brother to throw off the yellow garment, and has promised to advance him to high office, but he has vowed, it is said, never to prostrate himself before the king, and does not seem inclined to accept his offer; being in the priesthood, when they meet, the king is obliged to reverence his cloth.

Mr. Hunter intimated to the Praklang my wish to call on him again to-day, and as they have not made any offer to assist us, it would probably be advisable at once to apply to the Praklang for an order to the South-West chiefs to permit the sale of elephants and cattle, as the season for passing through the country is rapidly wearing away, and especially as a letter had been received by Mr. Hunter a day or two previous to my arrival, from George De Castro,\* dated Chumpahoon, the 7th January, to which place he had been sent from Mergui for the purchase of elephants and cattle, which the Myo-won had refused to sell without an order from this government. In the evening, accompanied by Mr. Hunter only, I went to the Praklang's, he was waiting for us in the hall in which he previously received us, along with his assistant and several other government officers; my reception was cordial and friendly as before. I took with me a present of two rolls of Brussel carpeting, a pair of pistols, a pair of porcelain essence bottles, and a few articles of cut glass; he said he was much obliged to me for not only coming through the desert I had passed, to make the bands of friendship stronger between the English and the Siamese, but in addition, for bringing presents. I remarked the presents were valuable only as pledges of that friendship; he said true, and that friendship was invaluable. From the white elephant of Maulmain,

\* A person sent by the commissioner in the Tenasserim provinces to purchase elephants and cattle on the public account at Chumpahoon, on the Gulf of Siam.

and about which they did not display much curiosity, the conversation led to that at Ava, and hence to Ava affairs. Generally from the whole tenor of his remarks, it was impossible not to see that his sentiments were the same as those of his son and Radsithe. After waiting till the subject was nearly exhausted, and he had several opportunities of offering his assistance and co-operation, without having done so, I produced George De Castro's letter, which Mr. Hunter, who interpreted, had before explained, and begged he would send an order to Chumpahoon, and all the officers on that frontier, to permit the people to dispose of their cattle without interference, and that I might be furnished with a copy to transmit to Mr. De Castro. He said he had already seen that letter, but that as I was daily expected when it was received, he had not yet mentioned it to the king. He made the usual objections on the score of religion to furnishing cattle for slaughter; I said there was no denying that we killed cattle for food, and that we did so without attaching any criminality to it. I mentioned the fact of the Burman army round Rangoon having slaughtered and eaten cattle which we had refrained from killing; that many of the Laos and Siamese people killed bullocks, and that I had never heard any of them refuse to eat beef; that 300 pigs were killed daily at Bangkok, and, moreover, that before we bought the Laos cattle, they were sold to the Red Kareens, who killed and eat them under the name of sacrifices to the Nâts; but that the cattle now required were for the carriage of supplies, and not for slaughter. I also requested an order to the Isoboas of the northern Laos towns not to interfere to prevent their people from selling their surplus cattle, and requested permission to take it up myself, as we wished to make arrangements for an efficient supply of cattle reaching the Provinces by the beginning of May, and that I would return here if the king and ministers wished; that I should remain for a short time, to keep the ministers informed on the true state of affairs between the British Government and the Government of Ava. He inquired on what route I should wish to travel; I said by land, up the banks of the May-Ping, or any route he thought shortest and best. He replied there

was no road that way for elephants; and Mr. Hunter said, he had seen elephants brought down the river on rafts. I said it was merely my personal dislike to travel in a boat that made me wish to go by land, but that that must not be allowed to interfere with public duty; if I were obliged to go by water, I should wish to leave the boats as soon as I could proceed by land, and buy elephants for the rest of the journey. He said I might go how I pleased; that the Isoboas have had orders to allow the people to sell, and had never interfered with their doing so. I said they had never in so many words ordered them not to sell cattle, but he well knew how easy it was to prevent it without such an order; as difficulties were thrown in the way, and the people were indirectly brought into trouble and fined, who did sell their cattle. He said the Isoboas were only tributary.

I asked when I was to have the honor of paying my respects to his Majesty; he said, he was but minister, and could only say I should have an audience; it remained with his Majesty to fix the day. I have been visited to-day by the Portuguese Consul and his Secretary, by the American Missionaries, and have received presents from his Majesty and the Praklang of fruits, &c.

*February 12th.*—Received presents of fruits, &c. from the King and Praklang, and a message from his Majesty to know if we were supplied with every thing we wanted, and whether my people wanted any thing. Benedito, the native Portuguese, the head of the native Christians here, (of whom there are a good many), was the bearer of the message, and said he had orders to call on me daily and attend to my wants. The Chow-fa, the second legitimate son of the late king, a very extraordinary man for a Siamese, has been expressing a strong wish to see me; he is about thirty years of age, reads and writes English with very great facility, has his house furnished expensively in the English style, and is on terms of intimacy with Mr. Hunter and other English gentlemen here, notwithstanding the strictness of Siamese etiquette. He was nearly coming to see me this evening, in fact he came down to the house and spoke to Mr. Hunter and Captain Browne for an hour or so. I have seen none of the officers of Government to-day, nor shall I before my

audience with the king, which is fixed to take place on the 17th. The Praklang is a great epicure, and withal liberal of his good things; he sends me daily several dishes of what he thinks the best, and is always particularly anxious to know if I eat any; he made very particular inquiries on that head, of Piadadie to-day. It seems to be with him quite as important a matter as any state duty he has to perform, in which he is not particularly interested. Patience is a virtue almost invaluable here.

*February 14th.*—Went to the Praklang's garden this morning, in hopes of meeting him, and hastening him in some little matter I was anxious he should settle, but did not see him. Mr. Hunter was sent for by him in the evening, to explain a view of London I had brought as a present to the king. I fear I shall have no business done before I obtain an audience of his Majesty. Piadadie called this evening for the king's presents, which I handed over to him.

Some of my Taline followers crossed over to the city to-day in a boat of Mr. Hunter's (as no Siamese or Taline dared furnish them with one) to see their relatives; there is a good deal of excitement amongst them, as a belief prevails that I have come to demand their release. The circumstance of the people crossing was reported to the king, who ordered that they should go wherever they pleased; he does not, however, wish me to take any of them to the audience, and they complain that their friends are still prevented coming to them.

*February 15th.*—Mr. Hunter saw the Praklang, who had sent Coon-Sit, his son, for my tents, to see them pitched, as he wished to have one made should he be obliged to go against the Malays. I had sent a message to him in the morning by Benedito to say my Taline people were very anxious to see the king, and as they were not subjects of Ava but England, I wished he would get permission for them to do so. He told Mr. Hunter I was to be received with higher honors than he had ever witnessed at Siam, and that they could not be admitted this time, but should I afterwards have a more private audience, they should then be allowed to accompany me. He also told him letters had arrived for me at Camboorie, but that the Myo-won was afraid to allow the messenger (who would not give up

the letters) to come on, without orders ; the Praklang had immediately dispatched an order that he should be forwarded forthwith. I doubt there is little chance of their arrival here in less than a week.

*February 16th.*—Benedito visited me to-day to make arrangements for the audience. Mr. Hunter had, however, settled all these matters with the Praklang. In the evening I heard prince Chow-fa, who will probably succeed to the throne, was going on board the whale ship *Hamilton*, and as I knew he wished to see me, but did not wish openly to come here till after the audience, I went on board just before dark, and soon after it was dark he came on board. He was in a small boat, and only four or five men with him, dressed, as all ranks usually are, with a cloth and crape scarf round his loins ; he is a stout dark man, about 30, with a good tempered appearance, of which he has the character, laughs heartily, and speaks English with very tolerable proficiency ; he is intimate with Captain Browne and Mr. Hunter ; shook hands with me on coming on board, and said, “ oh, oh, I should not have seen you, till you had seen the king”. I told him I had heard much of him, and was very anxious to see him, but this meeting was of course quite accidental. He remained about an hour talking familiarly with us all ; he expressed a wish to see the map I had of Ava, and the North of Siam, and talked of my route and observations. He is himself an excellent observer, and much attached to the English and English manners and habits.

*February 17th.*—This being the day appointed for my audience with his Majesty, about half-past nine, Benedito, who was to accompany us from the house, reported the boats ready to take us over the river, and at 10, we started ; Mr. Hunter and myself in one boat, such as is used by the ministers ; Captain Browne, of the whale ship *Hamilton*, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Hayes, gentlemen belonging to Mr. Hunter’s establishment, and an officer of Captain Browne’s ship in a second boat, like a Burman pounge ; and my followers in a third. In a few minutes we crossed the river, and passing up beyond the landing place used by the king, landed near some large sheds, where we found Piadadie, and several other native Christians, officers of the

Siamese army, dressed in their embroidered uniforms, with gold epaulets, &c. waiting to receive us. Benedito had a spare cocked hat, with tawdry embroidery and some rubies of small value, stuck about it, carried before him on a thing like a barber's wig block. Mr. Hunter and myself had brought with us two hammocks furnished us by his Excellency the Praklang, in which I was carried by eight of my own bearers, and Mr. Hunter by four of his own servants. We had here to wait several minutes for the horses which were provided for the other gentlemen; they at length arrived, and we moved forward, preceded by Benedito, Piadadie, and others. Though within a few paces of the southern entrance of the palace, we were as usual not allowed to enter there, but carried round through one or two small streets by another gate, further from the palace. Outside the inner gate the native Christians took off their shoes and stockings, and immediately within it we got out of our hammocks, and walked through two lines of soldiers, who on this occasion were all standing up, some with shouldered arms, some at ease, some muskets on one shoulder, some on the other. Though there are said to be an immense number of muskets in the country, many of those used to-day were so covered with rust as to be useless. The men were all dressed in a sort of uniform jacket, or red shirt, with a conical red cap of varnished basket work. Some, I suppose the native Christian artillery-men, were dressed in better jackets, and blue cloth caps, with a little yellow embroidery. They generally were I think under sized, decidedly inferior in point of muscularity to the Burmans, and some of them mere boys. There was a formidable body of what the Burmese call "dank yea," brave "sticks," armed with clubs, any one of whom is said to be able to keep off two Siamese swordsmen; there was also a body of spearmen, and close to the door of the palace the band, composed chiefly of drums, trumpets of various kinds, and hunter's horns. Outside the first enclosure there was a small body of cavalry, perhaps fifty horses, and inside the second enclosure, close to the road, fifteen elephants, each with two riders besides the mahout, all dressed in red cotton velvet jackets, some were plain, some embroidered, with caps to correspond. A short way from the palace door we

were shown into the Praklang's hall of justice, in which a carpet was spread, and a seat prepared for us; here, with Benedito and some other of the Portuguese officers, we were detained for forty-five minutes, till the princes were assembled. The people were perfectly civil, and with a little mild persuasion of the rattan, tolerably quiet. My people came with me to this hall, and followed me to the door of the palace, where they might have remained quietly, had not some of them attempted to come into the hall; they were in consequence conducted back to the hall where we had halted, outside the gilt door of the palace, which was closed. The Siamese and native Christians who accompanied us fell on their knees and made as many prostrations as they could, for a minute or less, while the door was opening. We walked in, taking off our hats at the door, Benedito creeping in before me on his knees and elbows, and some of the others crawling near us. Immediately inside the door, is a gilded screen, near which the people were lying so close that only one could pass at a time; after passing it we came in sight of the king; beyond this we advanced a few paces, and sat down on the carpet (which covered the whole centre of the hall) in the place pointed out to us, making two or three salams to his Majesty, after which he called us to come nearer; myself and Mr. Hunter then went in advance of the presents I had brought, and the other gentlemen close up behind. At one side, and immediately in front of us, was Pia-pil-pat, the second Praklang, who was the channel of communication with his Majesty. The Pya read a list of the presents, commencing and ending with a long list of his Majesty's titles; after which, the king at intervals put the usual questions, and as Piadadie (the interpreter) who met us when we landed, had been taken ill and obliged to go home, Mr. Hunter was requested to act as interpreter, and spoke sometimes in the Portuguese of this country to Pascal, and sometimes in Siamese to Radsithee. The king asked if it was the same Governor General who had sent Colonel Burney, who now ruled India; how long the present Governor General had had his sway there; asked after the Queen, the Right Honorable the Governor General and the Com-



missioner's health, how long I had been on the road, how treated, &c. &c. Near the end of the audience, he inquired on what terms we were with the Burmans; I detailed fully the state of our relations with Ava. He said, the Siamese had always been the foes of the Burmans, who are never to be trusted; the Cochin-Chinese are also of the same character; for though he had been a benefactor to the present king's father, they had gone to war with him; but with the Chinese they had always been friends from the beginning of time, and hoped they should be friends, through all time coming, with the English. I took the opportunity of saying, that the Right Honorable the Governor General would be happy to hear how entirely his Majesty's wishes for increasing friendship and intercourse between the two countries coincided with his own. He said he was much obliged to the Governor of Bengal for the present Mission. From the knowledge I have of the Laos language, and its affinity to the Siamese, I could make out that my answers to the king's questions were modified to meet the royal ear. Mr. Hunter, however, told me that the entire substance of what I had said was communicated. At the end of the audience his Majesty said, if I had any business to transact, the Chowkoon-booden and Chowkoon-maha-see-na (the Praklang) would attend to it, and that any wish of the Governor of Bengal was the same as if it were his own. He requested Mr. Hunter (whom they consider as a Siamese officer) to pay me every attention, and let me want nothing that was to be had in Siam; he then gave a few strokes with a ratan on some metallic substance, and the gold cloth was drawn across the hall before the throne, the courtiers all made repeated obeisances, and the audience closed. We remained a few minutes after the king had retired. Coon-Sit came over to us and introduced me to Chowkoon-booden, who said he should be glad to see me, and hear every thing I had to say. The hall of audience is about 120 feet long, and 60 broad, with two unsightly rows of square brick pillars, about 15 feet from the wall; and between these pillars there is a space of about 45 or 50 feet covered with carpets; close to the curtain, a little to the left of the throne,

with their heads towards the king, crouched upon their elbows, were the princes of the blood, perhaps 20 or 30 in number; immediately behind them, the Chow-pya Praklang (who is also Kalahon, a higher office than Praklang, in virtue of which he controls the affairs of one half of the kingdom towards the west and south); beside, and behind him were a number of the highest officers, inferior to him; on the right of the king, in a line with the Praklang, Chowkoon-booden, the prime minister, (who rules the eastern and northern half of the kingdom) was crouched, with officers the same as the Praklang near him. The whole of the rest of the hall was crowded with officers of less note, except a space of 10 or 12 feet wide right down the centre, where we were seated, about one-third of the way up to the hall, the presents immediately behind us; Piatschadook Pia-pi-pat, the Praklang's deputy, and Pia-Choolia, the chief of the natives of the Coromandel Coast, immediately in front of us; Mr. Hunter on my right, and Radsithee close to him. The king, who was seated on his highest throne, on which Mr. Hunter had never before seen him, addressed Pia-pi-pat, who repeated the questions to Radsithee, he again to Mr. Hunter, who communicated them to me. The hall is painted to resemble paper, with a paltry looking glass above, and a miserable print between each window. The courtiers were all dressed in their robes of ceremony, muslin with flowers of gold, and heavy gold embroidery on each arm; the six first on each side of the hall had, besides these, a gold betel apparatus, diminishing a little in size from those of Chow-pya-koon-booden and the Praklang, which were in size and shape like an old fashioned soup tureen; those behind them had the same apparatus, and some of less costly materials. The throne was raised about 15 feet from the floor, apparently all of gold, in shape something like a boat, with four pillars and a small canopy, all of the same metal; close to the feet of it was a child about 11 years old, I believe the youngest son of the king; near him was a musical clock, which was sent out a present to the emperor of China from England, with Lord Amherst, and was bought for the king by Mr. Hunter.—On the whole, my reception (as I was frequently told it would be) was one of

more state and ceremony, and of longer and more friendly nature as regards the time of its continuance, (lasting one hour and 20 minutes) and number of questions put, than has been granted to any Mission for many years, which I presume may be attributed to the more just idea they now have of the power and resources of the British Government. The conquest of Ava, and the long retention of the provinces, are however the only data on which they form their estimate, in addition to the personal character of Mr. Hunter, who, in a residence of 14 or 15 years, at first under very trying circumstances, has, by honorable dealings and a proper degree of self-respect, obtained for himself great influence with the king and officers of Government, and (by the influential people to whom he has familiar access) a nearer approach, as far as their ignorance and arrogance would permit them, to a more just appreciation of our relative rank in the scale of nations. On leaving the hall we visited one or two of the richest Kyoungs, or convents for the priests, the gilding and gold ornaments of some of which were solid and expensive; one of the chandeliers, of which there were many suspended from the high roofs of the building, was pointed out to me as having cost 100*l.* in London. In the same Kyoung is the famous image, said by the Siamese to be one entire emerald, of about 18 inches or two feet high, which was pronounced by Mr. Finlayson to be either Chinese figure-stone or a peliotrope, but as it is raised on a pyramidal pedestal (richly gilt and inlaid with gold) of about 16 or 20 feet high, it is difficult to say what it is. The whole of the outside of the building is also gilt, and inlaid with stained glass, and the appearance is altogether rich and unique; round the edifice are a number of grotesque figures of fabulous animals. From this we visited a second, somewhat inferior to the first. My Burman followers have remarked, that there is not a pagoda or priest's house, that they can hear of, in Bankok, that has not been built by the king, or some of the very highest officers of the kingdom; who, as they remark, can oblige the poor people to do the work, whilst they take the credit; and there is no doubt, that though the Siamese do not perhaps extort money from the lower orders in the way the Burmans do, they exact so much more personal

service from them, as they have no time to acquire any by extortion. We were then taken to see the large guns, one of which, in particular, a brass one, was cast by the nobles, the king superintending. The mould was placed upright, and surrounded by stairs on all sides, the princes and great officers were all seated round with bellows and smelting pots; when the metal was ready, at a signal given by the king they all ran up the steps with their pots, and poured the contents into the mould. This gun is probably not less than seventeen or eighteen feet long, and the bore about six and a half inches in diameter. There were a great number of good iron guns of different calibers, piled up in sheds, in various parts of the palace enclosure, and a good many others mounted in a shed near the wall. We then visited the white elephant, one male now only remaining of the five which were here at the time of Mr. Crawford's Mission; he is a large handsome animal, much like the one in Ava, excepting that from vice he has broken off both his tusks nearly close to the jaw. They made some inquiries about the one in Maulmain, which is very much darker than this, though said to be an Isadan. From the elephant-shed, which is close to the river, outside the palace enclosure, we embarked in the boats which had come round for us, and returned home. In the evening the Praklang sent for Mr. Hunter to inquire how I was pleased with my reception, who told him that I was highly pleased with every thing.

*February 18th.*—To-day I returned the visit of the Portuguese Consul, Mr. Marcelleeno. In the evening Coon-Sit called on his way to the palace, where he and a number of others, who are honored with the title of "ma-lik," or little dogs, nightly attend from about 9 or 10 o'clock till 1 in the morning, when all the news of the city is talked over; sometimes they are detained even later. He asked me how I sat in the presence of, and how I addressed, the king of Ava; I told him, I sat as I had done yesterday at the palace, and addressed the king as familiarly as I did him now; he confessed it was better than the way they were obliged to lie here like dogs. There has been an absurd story current in the town to-day of an attempt I wished to make on the king's life; it was said, I had brought three boxes as presents,

two of which I opened and shewed the contents, but the third I had refused to open except in the presence of his Majesty alone, who had, however, with great sagacity, discovered it to be filled with some explosive materials, and gave orders that it should not be admitted into the palace. Absurd as this story may appear, it was firmly believed by a number of people. Scarcely any thing is too ridiculous to gain credit, even with the highest officer. Some Siamese had been in Maulmain last year when the European Regiment was landing there, and on their return, reported to the Praklang that an immense force of Europeans in fifty ships were at Maulmain, destined to attack Siam; he immediately sent for Mr. Hunter and questioned him about it, who used all the reasoning he could to convince him of the falsehood of the report; he at last told him, which at all events prevented them from saying any thing more about it, that the English would certainly not collect fifty ships to take Siam, as two would be quite sufficient; he heard no more of the intended invasion.

*February 19th.*—About three o'clock this afternoon Benedito and Pascal came to conduct us to the house of Chowkoonbooden. Josis Piadadie continues sick, and Mr. Hunter was kind enough to act as interpreter; Captain Browne and Mr. Smith accompanied us. After about half an hour's detention, (attended by the Portuguese above mentioned and Radsithee) whilst coffee and sweetmeats were served in a small shed 10 feet by 20, outside the enclosure of his present habitation, where a band of dancing women (he and Cromaluang-rak, the king's uncle, and the head of the princes only are allowed to have dancing women) exhibited for our amusement,—we were conducted into the hall, where we found him seated on an elevated platform, the second Praklang and several Siamese officers on one side, and some 20 or 30 Laos chiefs on the other. Chairs and the Praklang's coffee equipage were placed for us on the same side as the Siamese chiefs. After I had expressed the thanks of the Right Honorable the Governor General in the terms of Mr. Prinsep's letter, and of Mr. Blundell, as conveyed in his letter to the ministers, nearly an hour was spent in compliments and general professions of friendship for

the English; and in return, I assured him of the deep interest the Right Honorable the Governor General and high officers in India had in the welfare of Siam, and their sincere wish for the continuance of the very friendly relations at present existing between the two countries. I said I was much obliged to the king for the honor of an early audience; and that I could not forget his friendly assurance, that the ministers would attend to any thing I had to say, and that any wish of the Right Honorable the Governor General was the same as if it were his own. He replied, that when the king was so friendly, the ministers must of course be equally so.

We remained until half-past six with this minister, discussing various points of business. His Excellency inquired if I wished to take certain orders to Laos myself, and whether I intended returning from thence to Bangkok; I replied I wished to be the bearer of the order to Zimmay, but that my return here depended on the wishes of the king. He replied we were good friends, and I might take the order and return by any way I pleased; if I wished to return here, I might do so. I thanked him for the permission to proceed to Zimmay. After leaving the minister's house we went to the palace of Chow-fa-noi, which is a short way above our residence, on the right bank of the river. It was built by Pya-tack, the Chinese king, who re-established the monarchy, and built a new town here, on the site of the old French factory, after the old city of Yodea had been taken, and the royal family carried off by the Burmese. It is a brick building, and stands in a small fort close to the river, on the angle formed by the junction of the Maha-tchi canal; it was full of pointed gables and cross roofs, like an old farm house in England; it covers a great extent of ground, and has an immense number of apartments and passages, some covered, some open. In the morning, as he was going down the river to get up a mast in one of Pya-pi-pat's war junks, he called at the factory, and requested me, if I intended calling on him to-day, to come about 7 P.M. It was just seven when we arrived at his house, and in ten minutes he came home. He is the second legitimate son of the late king, and will probably

succeed his half brother, the present king. He is intimate with Mr. Hunter and Captain Browne; the latter has instructed him in observing and finding the longitude, in which he was a very apt scholar; he is easily accessible to all English frequenting the port, and much attached to us. The room we were received in was fitted in the English style, and on the table was a splendid gilded lamp with cut-glass shades, which was made for William the Fourth, the walls were decorated with English prints, and he had a small library of English books, of which the *Encyclopedia Britannica* formed a part. He was kind and cordial in his reception, and familiar in his conversation with us all. Our entertainment consisted of a light supper, coffee, and sweetmeats, after which he went to look at his band in an ante-room; it consisted of twelve or fourteen musicians. Several of the instruments were of his own invention. He moved freely about the room, in which we followed his example. He introduced us to his wife, who is a tall fine woman of Taline descent, of unusually pleasing manners for a Siamese. He had his little son, who was asleep, brought out to us; I have seldom seen a finer child, he is about five months old, and was dressed in a red English frock and blue cap, with a gold band round it; he had been inoculated four or five days ago by Dr. Bradley, and the disease promised to be favorable. The small-pox is raging here with fatal violence; it is treated by the natives by repeated bathing or rather effusion of cold water five or six times a day from the commencement of the pyrexia. Chow-fa-noi also shewed us his jewels, which must be of considerable value; there were three broad gold belts studded with diamonds, the smallest of which, by rough calculation, contained 1300, many of them large and valuable; a box containing thirty-five rings, many of them diamonds of considerable value; he had only one or two rubies, and those inferior ones; the jewels were strewed about the table in perfect confidence. His reception of us was frank and cordial. His servants, to one or two of whom he speaks in English, and in which language they are obliged to answer, stand up and move about his house with freedom. There were none of the nobles of the land present. We took our leave about 10½ o'clock.

*February 20th.*—I proposed, through Mr. Hunter, to meet the Praklang and Chowkoon-booden together, as each appeared to have a separate jurisdiction, and could not give an order on my business without reference to the other. There was no objection made to my proposition. The Praklang suggested that I ought to visit Cromaluang-rak, the king's uncle, the head prince, who would be prepared to see me on Friday; in the meantime, I should have received my letters from Maulmain. I am most anxious to get on a more intimate footing with the ministers, but fear I cannot succeed before all the visits of ceremony are got over. Old Benedito called in the afternoon, and told me privately he had no doubt all my wishes would be complied with; he is however an insignificant old gossip. Coon-Sit came also in the morning.

*February 22nd.*—Called to-day, at 4 P.M., on Cromaluang-rak, whose house is to the south of the palace enclosure, about five minutes walk from the bank of the river. On the way we crossed a new Nât, building by the king; the pagodahs, Kyoung's temple, rocks and small trees, (of which, much is in the Chinese style,) may cover ten or twelve acres. Betwen the walls of the palace and the house of the prince is the race-course, where the horses are exercised, of which there were perhaps twenty galloping about for our amusement; there were also a small Arab and Cutch horse in gilded saddles paraded, with about fifteen or twenty elephants. Though this is the country of elephants, I did not see one good looking animal; some of them were large, and one with very large tusks we had seen before in the palace. The horses are inferior to the elephants, and apparently for no other purpose than to look at. Here we were detained about twenty minutes, outside the prince's gate, in an open shed, the native Christians, Benedito and Pascal, the Praklang's son, and some Siamese officers whom I did not know, were also present. The prince's house is sadly out of repair, and he is about building a new one. The hall in which he received us, was a low room about forty feet long by twenty-five broad, nothing at all rich or showy about it, except a curtain cloth of gold. He was seated on a sort of low pedestal, like the thrones of the Laos Isobaos, and a white umbrella behind him.



A large concourse of people were collected outside ; on interrogating some of them, they said they had come to see the (Kek Mounng's) visitors. There might be about 100 people, princes and others, in the hall. He asked nearly the same questions as the king, to which the same answers were returned. I complained of the detention of my letters, and said the Mya-won of Camboorie should be reprimanded for stopping them contrary to the custom of all civilized countries. The prince appeared affable and good tempered; but Mr. Hunter, who sees him frequently, says he was distant and constrained, evidently at a loss what to say. The visit lasted about an hour, (the round-about questions and answers occupying nearly all the time) when we were asked to go into a large hall outside, where a table was spread and refreshments offered us and fruit, sweetmeats, the Parklang's coffeeset were again in requisition ; here we remained perhaps half an hour, and then returned home. The visit was altogether one of ceremony ; no one spoke but the prince and myself. Mr. Hunter again kindly accompanied me.

*February 24th.*—Yesterday received dispatches from Mr. Blundell. I saw the Praklang to-day, and pushed for the delivery of the Thugs, as they are in his division of the kingdom, and said, I would write with them to Captain Macfarquhar, who would pay the person on delivery, and sent in charge of them, fifteen rupees each, to defray any expence the Siamese government might have been at on their account; he said they should be given up; and remarked that they paid three catties (160 ticals), for each man so delivered, and asked me to give up six Cochin-Chinese, who had escaped to Maulmain. I said that as I did not know their crime, I could not promise their being given up, but that if he could furnish me with a copy of the evidence against them and their sentence, I would forward it to the Commissioner, and in the mean time tell him whether I thought it likely they could be given up; if they were only run-away prisoners, it would be unreasonable to expect them; several of our people came here voluntarily, we did not dream of demanding them; he said if I examined their backs, I would see the marks of the ratan; I told him they might have been punished for faults which was in some sort an

expiation, but certainly did not render them criminals for life; their case was, I believed, very different from the Thugs, who, for murder of the most cold-blooded character, were condemned to imprisonment for life. The subject was then dropped. I introduced that of the Chinese caravan, and requested him to give orders to the Zimmay chief not to prevent them from coming on to Maulmain; he said he had sent for the Zimmay Chow-Hona, and in presence of Mr. Hunter had given him positive instructions on that head, and he had assured him, the Chinese had never been interfered with, but that finding the market at Maulmain did not suit their goods, had, of their own accord, declined going there. I mentioned the facts of the case, which were, that the Chinese from the first had expressed an earnest wish to trade directly with us, and in spite of the lateness of the season, several of them had come to Maulmain, (sent by the head man of the caravan) after my first meeting them in Laos, and so satisfied were they with the market, that a large party had last year come to Zimmay, where they had been prevented proceeding by the Chow-Hona of that place; many of the goods intended for Maulmain not suiting the Laos market, they were obliged to take back with them, or dispose of at a considerable loss.

It was now half-past eleven, and the old gentleman intimated that it was time to go to the palace. I pressed him to settle these matters as soon as possible, as the season was wearing away, and I wished to start for Laos in a few days; he said I should go any way I pleased; if I wanted boats, he would furnish them; if I wanted to go by land, I could do so; and that I should not be detained longer than necessary. The old gentleman was exceedingly affable, friendly, and good tempered throughout the whole discussion. We took our leave, and he immediately got into his boat to go to the palace.

*February 28th.*—In the morning I went to the camp (so called) of the native Christians, who live about a mile above the town. In going there, we went down the river a few hundred yards, and entered a small branch which forms the island on which the town is built; it is not more than perhaps 120 feet wide, houses are built close down to the water on both banks, and the stream, except in the centre, crowded

with floating houses and boats ; several other small branches or canals run at right angles from this through the town, the walls of which are of brick, about eighteen feet thick, and perhaps twenty or twenty-five feet high, following the slight sinuosities close along the banks of the stream, but could only be seen occasionally from the crowded state of the houses on the banks. There is at each angle of the walls a projecting sort of bastion with a double wall, and a turret of flimsy construction, and the whole works seem exceedingly contemptible; the passage of this branch, which surrounds a little more than one-half of the town, occupied about forty minutes, and about twenty more from this to the Christian location. Every thing about them, except the houses of the chiefs, Benedito and Pascal, was mean, dirty, and disgusting, beyond any thing I have seen in this part of the world, and the character of the inhabitants is said to correspond ; we visited also the priests, both of them Frenchmen, who are highly respectable men in their station. The bishop is just now absent at Singapore. Besides the descendants of Portuguese, who amount at this station, which is called the Cambodea Camp, to 700, there are 1400 Cochin-Chinese Roman Catholics who fled from that country, being persecuted on account of their religion, about four years ago. Though the hovels they live in are miserably small and dirty, yet they are said to be tolerably contented, and find it easier to obtain a livelihood here than in Cochin-China, where they say there are hundreds of families who never knew what it was to be possessed of one coin of the smallest denomination ; they chiefly occupy themselves, I believe, in fishing, though many of them, beg about the town. We remained at Pravie-tsets (Benedito) about two hours, and returned home by the main river. Visited the Praklang after dinner. When we arrived at his house, we found the second Praklang and other officers there as before ; there was a good deal of conversation regarding Bir-mah and England, on which last subject the Praklang, from his intimacy with Mr. Hunter, is better informed than people on this side of the Ganges generally are, though I am certain he does not believe what he has been told of the extent and number of our colonies, the tonnage of our shipping, &c.

On matters of business little was done. With reference to my returning here, he observed I might do as I pleased; to tell me not to come back, would not be friendly, and to tell me to do so would not be proper. I complained again of the detention of my letters, contrary to the custom of civilized countries, at Camboorie; he excused the act on the ground that the customs of the Siamese and English differed; the Mya-won dared not allow them to come on without reporting it to the ministers. I said I had no wish to infringe any of their customs, but requested that whilst I was here, as they knew the people with letters having a pass from the Commissioner of Tenasserim must be coming to me, and that the letters were for the information of the ministers, that he would give orders that they should not again be stopped.

*March 1st.*—A dispatch arrived last night from the Governor of Songora, reporting that the Malays were within two miles of that place with 3000 men, and begging immediate assistance. The Rajah of Ligore though he promised on his departure from this immediately to recover Queda and put a stop to all the disturbance on the peninsula, has not yet left Ligore, and as even Siamese report gives him no more than three thousand men, the truth probably is, he has not half that number yet assembled.

*March 2nd.*—Radsithee and Coon-Sit called this evening.

*March 4th.*—The Praklang sent to tell me that the Taungthoos I left at Neamgben are at Camboorie, and wished to know whether I intended them to come on here; I told Piadadie to tell him they were merchants, and ought never to have been stopped, and begged they might be allowed immediately to come on if they wished it, as this is a direct infringement of the treaty. I hope I shall now be able to put an end quietly to these absurd stoppages of our people at Camboorie on my next visit.

*March 6th.*—Sent to the Praklang to beg he would allow me to see him for a few minutes to enable me to answer my letters and dispatch the messengers to Maulmain, who have now been most unexpectedly, and much to my annoyance, detained eleven days. As this was the day till which I was requested to wait, on my last message to him, I was much disappointed about four

o'clock to get a message from him by an old Portuguese begging me to give him to-day and to-morrow; that the preparation and embarkation of the troops for the Malay expedition had fully occupied all his time. I fear I shall still be disappointed, and obliged to close my letters without any positive information on certain points on which I depend for answers from this most dilatory government; it will take a month to reach Zimmay from this, and from thence it is twenty-three days more to Maulmain, which will bring it to the middle of May, (supposing I even start on the 10th of this month, which is the earliest I can possibly expect, and have no detention in Laos,) before I can possibly reach Maulmain.

*March 7th.*—The force for the reinforcement of the Rajah of Ligore having dropped up with the tide last night for his Majesty's inspection, sailed down again to-day, after firing a salute of a few guns, and is considered as having started, though they will not finally leave for two or three days. The first part of it which I saw passed down about 12 o'clock, it consisted of twelve war boats, two large and three small junks. The largest, a very fine vessel which the Rajah of Ligore was six years in building, and which he presented sometime ago to the king, was commanded by the commander-in-chief, Pra-si-pi-pat, the Praklang's brother, it was very gaily decked with red flags and streamers, and himself habited in a red dress, with a good deal of embroidery, looking at the distance from which I saw it, much like the war dress of the Burman chiefs; on his head he had a broad brimmed beaver hat, with a sort of gilt spire attached to the top of it; he had a splendid gilt cabin erected above the taffrail, and a chatta bearer with a large red chatta shading him from the sun. The smaller boats were towing his junk, and pulled by the soldiers, all of whom were dressed in red jackets, or shirts, and white trowsers. There might be perhaps 1,500 or 2,000 men in this part of the fleet, and one or two junks sailed down afterwards with perhaps 500 or 1,000 more, called by the government 5,000.

There is a deficiency of transports, though the king has borrowed every junk he could get hold of, many of which will probably never be restored again, as the people put in

command on such occasions sometimes sell them or run off to the eastward, instead of bringing them back to Bangkok. The troops with their new red jackets certainly looked tolerably formidable, though more in appearance than reality, many of them never having fired a musket in their lives, and it is also the general's own debût in a military capacity. It is said, I know not with what truth, that a little jealousy on the part of the king (to whom he is related) obtained him the high distinction. A few months ago, his son and eight others (four women, amongst whom was the guilty fair one, and four men) were beheaded for an intrigue with one of the palace ladies, and for causing an image of the king to be made and running a javelin through its heart to cause him to turn away this woman. They were tried by the fathers of the two culprits, condemned, and beheaded. It is said, the king wished to spare them, and asked their fathers to be security for their future good conduct; but fearing the king might think they supposed the punishment undeserved, or some other motive equally Siamese, or slavish, they refused. It is said, the king supposes Pra-si-pi-pat to be discontented, and hopes the Malays will give a good account of him, as the commander-in-chief; however, he chuses his own position, and as putting himself voluntarily where there was a chance of danger would be viewed as utter folly, he will probably return. I should think, however, the king has little reason to fear him, and I doubt if there be any ground for the report. As the Praklang's anxiety about the equipment of the troops is now at an end, I sent to him this evening (Mr. Hunter was kind enough to go), and begged, I might now have the boats to dispatch the messengers; he promised that I should have them to-morrow, and wanted to know why I was in such a hurry!! I yesterday sent one of my people overland to Nak-outcha-thee to look at the elephants, he returned this evening; the distance is about eighteen or twenty miles, and after crossing two small canals near Bangkok, the road is perfectly good and dry, as I expected he would find it.

*March 8th.*—Being disappointed in receiving the boats, I called on the Praklang (whom I had not seen since the 28th ultimo) this evening, he said he had given orders about the boats, and

supposed I had got them; those which had brought the people from Camboorie had been detained for them, and the man in charge of them was ordered to wait on me. The Praklang offered to deliver the Thugs over to me, but I could not take charge of them; I warned him of their character, and told him that they annually in India committed many hundreds of murders, where more care was taken to prevent it, than could be done in Siam. I told him I was anxiously waiting for the letters, and (in answer to his question) that I wished to start on Monday or Tuesday, (the 11th or 12th). He told me the king himself, Cromaluang-rak, and Chowkoon-booden would each return an elephant for the presents I had brought them.

The Jaung-Kieuk of the Gyne district, who had accompanied me with a view of obtaining the release of his wife, (who had been separated from him at the emigration of the Talines from the district of Martaban in 1816, without his knowledge or consent, as he was at the time of the rising absent with the Mya-won of Martaban, some miles from the town), who by Burman law, and I doubt not Siamese law also, ought to be given up to him, has been making all the interest in his power to get this government to allow her to accompany him to Maulmain; amongst others, Mr. Hunter has repeatedly spoke to the Praklang about her, and as he would give no answer one way or other, I this night spoke to him for the first time on the subject, explaining at the same time, that it was a private request; he told me she might go if she had the leave of the person with whom she now lives, and was willing to go, but that he had been told she was not willing. I said I had seen the woman myself, and she had told me she was most anxious to return, as her mother and relations were at Maulmain; he promised to inquire into the subject, and we took our leave about 8 P.M.

*March 9th.*—About noon, dispatched the boat with the letters, giving the messenger ten rupees for the boatman, if he reached Takanoon in ten days. In the afternoon Mr. Hunter was sent for to translate the letters to Mr. Prinsep and the Commissioner, which are almost transcripts of those of which I was the bearer. The force destined for Sangora is still in the river, about five

miles below the palace. Pra-si-pi-pat is said to be full of trouble. They discovered yesterday that they had forgotten to embark their ammunition, and in the night all the soldiers from ten of the boats deserted. Though so many muskets have been imported within the last few years, so little care is taken of them, so many have been destroyed by white ants and rust (they are never cleaned) that they are very imperfectly supplied, and for appointments they appear to have none; on the whole, it would be difficult to imagine a people more contemptible in a military point of view, than the Siamese.

*March 11th.*—Sent Piadadie to the Praklang for my letter and orders to the Laos people; the clerks told him they had brought them to me, and I had refused to receive them. The Praklang was too much taken up with the dispatch of the fleet, to give much of his attention to my business. They find now they have no water, and nothing to put it in, and are obliged to borrow some casks from Mr. Hunter.

*March 12th.*—Sent to the Praklang to propose calling on him this evening, and found he had gone to Pack-nam to endeavour to get the fleet off, from whence he will not return till to-morrow. Received yesterday from the king 240 ticals for another month's expense.

*March 13th.*—Piadadie came over this morning, and on the letter to the Laos chief being translated, I found it was not entirely what I required. Pra-Sooren, an inferior officer, (called also Kaloung, or king's slave) and one of the king's personal attendants, (ma-lik, little dogs) are to go up and see matters settled in the Laos country, and on no account is a misunderstanding to be allowed to take place. At about half-past five I went over to the Praklang with Mr. Hunter, who has always been kind enough to act as interpreter, Pra-see, Chowkoon-booden deputy, and one or two other chiefs more immediately connected with the Laos country were present. The Praklang asked me if I had made up my mind when I would start. I said, I had been some days wishing to get away, as the season was getting late, and had now come to speak to him about the orders to Laos. I thought also it was right that I should have an audience of leave from the king, and should take leave of the



prince and Chowkoon-booden ; he said neither Mr. Crawford nor Mr. Roberts (the American envoy) had an audience of leave, and that it was not at all necessary ; and that the prince and Chowkoon must have notice before I visited them ; that as my business was principally in his own department he saw me at any time in a friendly way. I said, though disappointed of not again seeing his Majesty, of course I must be guided by him, and wished to pay my other visits, so as to get away by the 16th. On starting, he said he did not wish to detain me, as he wanted to go down again to the fleet, and could not leave whilst I was here. He then told Radsithee to inquire when the prince and Chowkoon would see me. I requested him to give an answer about Jaung-Kieuk's wife ; he said she might go, but she had some debts here which she must pay. I told him the woman denied owing any money, but stated she had a good deal of property and some slaves ; he said the slaves could not accompany her, but he knew she had debts, part of which he believed had been paid, and part was still due. I begged him to order the business to be settled, as I wished to start on Saturday. He wished me health, a pleasant journey, and all kinds of good wishes, and said he should think of me when I was gone ; indeed, that he thought of me every day now, and always sent me something to eat ; and concluded by complimenting me on my knowledge of Siamese customs. I reciprocated his good wishes, and said I was obliged for his attention to my private wants and comforts ; and we took our leave amidst expressions of his esteem. On our return home we found the prince Chow-fa, who remained an hour ; and about 10 P.M. Radsithee came in and told me the prince Cromaluang-rak was too unwell to see me. To-morrow is the commencement of the new year, and the Praklang told Mr. Hunter to-day he knew the prince would not give up his plays to see any body. The Chow-pra-koon-booden said he would see me on Friday evening. I have been fortunate in obtaining permission to proceed to Laos, by which journey I hope I shall be able to throw some light on the geography of 5° of latitude in this country, hitherto never visited by a European ; and the very act of traversing the country, when done without violence

to any of their prejudices, will tend to break down the hitherto insurmountable objection to any intercourse with the interior of the kingdom.

*March 14th.*—Went round part of the town, and along an excellent bazar well supplied with fish, vegetables, meats, manufactures, and drugs; in short, a continued line of shops for a mile and a quarter down the left bank of the river, and notwithstanding their religious objections to slaughtering bullocks, the same favour is not extended to pigs, of which it is said, not less than two or three hundred are daily slaughtered in Bangkok alone. A few paces off the main street was a cage for some of the public women, with a row of twelve or fourteen small rooms, perhaps six feet by four, opening into a common verandah of about four feet wide, and perhaps six feet high, closed in front with bars like the cage of a wild beast. After breakfast, I sent to the Praklang for a copy of the Laos letter, and was fortunate enough to catch him just on the point of starting for Pack-nam; he gave a copy of the letter, and said he had given orders to the Pra-pi-pat, his deputy, and Pia-taip to settle the Jaung-Kieuk's business. Radsithee came in the evening to say, Chowkoon-booden would prefer seeing me to-morrow morning, and knowing, that he is looked on as a man of great ability and has much influence in the council here, I took an opportunity of letting him know my sentiments.

*March 15th.*—Crossed over to Chow-pya-koon-booden's this morning, and found him with his deputy and some other officers engaged in the important duty of looking at some dancing girls, with a band of music close to him, and about sixty people each knocking together two pieces of hard bamboo, and I should think not less than 2000 spectators; the noise was of course stunning. We were seated on chairs below his dais, on which was his deputy crouched at the foot of his couch, and Radsithee, who acted as intermediate interpreter, though Mr. Hunter speaks familiarly with him on ordinary occasions. He asked me at entering, after returning my salute, when I intended to start; I said it was my intention to have started to-morrow, but I was detained for the letters to the Laos chiefs. The banging and noise of the bamboos and music continued; we

could scarcely hear ourselves speak ; we sat a short time to look at the actors, and taking leave of him, we returned home. About ten girls were enacting a play ; the scene was laid in a wild forest in Java, with rocky mountains at one side of the theatre, constructed of boards painted blue and red, and a few branches and artificial flowers stuck about them, with steps concealed, at least where we sat, for the actors to climb amongst them. The theatre had no stage nor any shifting scenes, but was covered in, and had raised standing room for the spectators in rows above and behind each other, as in the Roman theatres. The piece represented a princess, who by philters was induced to run away with some low person. The old man seemed to take a childish interest in the thing. He is the most famous general in Siam, and distinguished himself amongst the Siamese in the last Cochin-Chinese war. After coming from his house we went for a few minutes to the house of the prince Chow-fa, where we met Mr. Jones, one of the American Missionaries. From the prince I got Mr. Crawford's account of his mission to this court, which he had understood ; he did not, however, make any comments on it. I asked him, in return for the map I had given him, for any geographical information he had regarding Siam ; he said none existed, and expressed his surprise at the extent and correctness of Mr. Crawford's information. He said he was anxious to get the king's leave to make a map of the kingdom from survey, but as he was the only man in the country who could do it, he could expect no assistance.

*March 17th.*—Received the letters for Mr. Prinsep and Mr. Blundell ; the former is in a stand representing a lotus flower, the latter in a red silk bag, and the same large boats which brought us from Tat-Chin, were sent for our conveyance to Nak-outcha-thee. In part for the sake of seeing more of the country, and in some measure from necessity, as the water is so low in many parts of the Zimmay river above the junction of the May-nam that much time would be lost at this season in digging away the sand, I have made up my mind to proceed to Nak-outcha-thee by water, and thence by land to Zimmay. I have been furnished with a passport from the ministers bearing their official seals, and stating that I had come with presents

from the chief of Bengal, and was proceeding to Yahine, Zimmay, Lagon, and Lebong, and ordering all the different chiefs of towns to pay us attention, and supply us with all necessaries. I conceive it might be turned into a sort of roving commission, as the Praklang told me when inquiring about the road, that he knew nothing about it, he had never been there, so no particular chiefs are mentioned, but to all we may fall in with. The person who is appointed to go with me to Nak-outcha-thee came this evening, and told me it would be necessary for him at this season (new year) to renew his oath of allegiance, so that I fear I shall not be able to get away to-morrow.

*March 18th.*—The Praklang returned last night from Packnam where he had been to see his brother and his fleet off, and as the detention of the people to swear allegiance to-day had detained me, I sent the port captain to him to say I wished to see him to take leave this evening, as I intended to start early in the morning; he excused himself (as I expected) on the plea of indisposition, but wished me a pleasant journey, &c. In compliance with the Praklang's instructions, Pia-pi-pat and Pia-Taip on the evening of the 14th sent for the Jaung-Kieuk and his wife to the Praklang's hall of justice, to determine whether, and on what terms, she would be allowed to accompany him. It is one of the highest courts of law in the kingdom, and I thought it too good an opportunity to witness a trial to be missed, and went down to the hall privately; the judge, Pia-pi-pat, gave me a seat on the bench, that is, on the floor beside him; plaintiff and defendant set themselves down before us, without regard to any particular arrangement, one or two other low officers were seated near the litigants, and several other people lolling about the floor near us. The place was the passage up to the Praklang's house, and looked like any thing, according to our notions, but a hall of justice. All the people spoke at once, some laughing and joking in the middle of the proceedings. The decision was, that the woman should go as a matter of favour, but that she must pay 755 ticals debts due, and 319 ticals lawyers' fees. On some old law pleas this last sum, however,

she was told should be remitted, but the form of a reference to the Praklang must be gone through; and this evening I told Piadadie to ask him to give an order on the subject.

*March 19th.*—Left Bankok at noon, and in fifteen minutes (against the tide) entered the creek just below Chow-fa's palace, which communicates with the Soop-Ham river; and in ten minutes reached the landing place on the left side of the creek, where the road to the town of Nak-outcha-thee commences. Here one boat being much crowded, I landed fourteen of the people, with a pass from a writer in the department who accompanied us, to proceed thither by land. At 2 P. M. the tide set so strong down the stream, that we were obliged to halt till 5 P. M., when we started again, and at seven were overtaken by a boat with a present of dried fruit and pickles from his Majesty; after taking which on board, we pulled on for the greater part of the night.

*March 20th.*—At 6 A. M. reached the new fort and town of Moug-tat-chin, where we breakfasted. The Myo-won, a very intelligent person, came to the zeat after breakfast, and expressed much interest about our present position with the Birman. We left Tat-chin at 10 A. M., but were obliged to come to a halt at eleven, from the strength of the tide. At 3 P. M. the tide being nearly done, and having little but the force of the stream to contend against, we started again, and at 4 passed the branch of the river which running westerly communicates with the May-klong. On the angle of the right side of the bifurcation stands the old town of Tat-chin, even now a very long village, containing four or five hundred houses in a row, two or three deep, along the bank of the main river, and this branch. At 8h. 20m. entered, on the left side of the river a small creek, which cuts off an angle of it, so narrow that at one or two turns we had some difficulty in getting the long boat round. There were two or three small villages on its banks, and a few cane fields, but, generally the banks were low, and covered with dunie or nipa. From this, at 11 P. M., we again entered the main river, and pulled on for a great part of the night.

*March 21st.*—Start at 5 A. M., and at ten halt an hour for breakfast, (myself and people having had no dinner yesterday,)

that of the boat people was brought ready cooked from Tat-chin. At 4h. 30m. landed at Nak-outcha-thee, where our people had arrived yesterday. I found the Palat and Yenkabot, (Tset-Kay and Na-Kan), waiting to receive me, the writer who accompanied us, having arrived an hour or two before us. I requested they would this night hand over the elephants to us, as I wished to see all right now, and start at daylight in the morning; they wished to put it off till the morning, but as I insisted, they sent people to bring them in. I told the writer I expected he would see, that a guide was furnished to the next halting place, as I could not, after the falsehood they had told me here on my way to Bangkok, put any trust in what their people said; it would disgrace the king and nation of Siam, when heard in other countries, that men at the head of a town condescended to such meanness. They attempted some explanation, but did not appear at all ashamed. About ten o'clock the people came back, and said one of the elephants had broken his hobbles, and that two of the remaining three had gone after him, so that they could not give them over to us this night; which will I fear cause another day's detention.

*March 22nd.*—Received the elephants to-day at 12 o'clock, which the government return for the presents brought, none of them remarkable for their appearance, and I did not receive the howdahs, which were in a most rickety condition, till about 7 P.M. Had a visit this afternoon from a lad dressed in a blue jacket and cap, white stockings and shoes, (and half a dozen other lads in the same costume, except the shoes and stockings) who pretended not to be able to speak Siamese, and as he could not speak any other language I was acquainted with, our communication was of course extremely limited. After he was gone I learned that he was the son of the priest, the eldest legitimate brother of the king.

*March 23rd.*—Ban-Sao, four hours fifty minutes, thirteen miles. Left Nak-outcha-thee at 6h. 25m. this morning, and travelling along the bamboo jungle, (which ran to the N. E. of our march on the way to Bangkok,) reached this place, having halted some time for the elephant at noon. There were a few inhabitants in the immediate vicinity of the road, the villages lying along

the edge of the jungle, near the plain which runs down to the head of the Gulf, as before mentioned. At 7h. 45m. we crossed a muddy nullah, and at 8h. 5m. a larger one by a bridge; at 8h. 15m. passed Ban-pa-neat; at 9h. 15m. Banroi; at 9h. 25m. Bon-ta-ko; at 9h. 55m. a larger village, say sixty houses; and at 12 halted here. The elephants came up at 1h. 35m. Last evening we heard an unusual rumbling noise, exactly like distant artillery, and in the night felt three or four shocks of an earthquake; the weather has been hot and sultry for some days, and yesterday at noon the thermometer stood at 106° in the tent; and some of the people from the heat did not come up till seven o'clock in the evening. We have had several sick for the last ten days, two cases of fever, one of small-pox, and one severe diarrhoea.

*March 24th.*—Ban-soap-la, four hours, twelve miles. Started this morning at 5h. 45m. and almost immediately entered the bamboo jungle, quitting the plain on the edge of which we halted last night, and have not seen it since. The road throughout the day, and since 8h. 5m. yesterday, has been good, and practicable for the carts of the country, one of which, drawn by buffaloes, hired by some of the traders has accompanied us. Water is scarce at this season, and what there is, is bad. At 6h. 25m. passed Bancong of fifty houses; at 6h. 45m. a small plain with a little cultivation; at 7h. 15m. a Laos village, of about thirty houses; at 7h. 25m. another of the same people, of ten houses; at 8h. 15m. Bantoom of ten houses, inhabited by Siamese; at 9h. a plain of some nine or ten miles circumference, apparently fertile, but from the great depth of the water in the rains could not be brought under cultivation. At ten we halted here near a Laos village of fifteen houses, about one long day's march west from the Nak-outcha-thee river, which between this and Soop-Ham winds away east. The country continues thinly populated, notwithstanding the endeavours of the Siamese to make it less so, by locating here the unfortunate prisoners from Weang-tchan, in southern Laos, which was taken by the Siamese in 1826 or 27, and the most horrible cruelties practised on the miserable inhabitants. Isoboa was kept during the short time he survived in an iron cage, with different instruments of torture along side of him, and obliged to proclaim, that

the king of Siam was merciful, and his punishment deserved ; being an old man, his brutal enemies were not long gratified by the sight of his sufferings.

*March 25th.*—Nong-Keam, 5h. 20m. fifteen miles. Started at 5h. 25m. and continued our march through the same description of country ; viz. nearly a dead level soil, and a sandy loam covered with bamboo jungle ; at 6h. 35m. at Banyong, a small village of Siamese. Cross the water, the banks of which we left at day-light, and which I now find is a stream uniting itself with the Nak-outcha-thee, though it was so choaked with water lettuce and other aquatic plants that no stream could be discovered in it. Here we obtained a fresh guide, and proceeding a few miles, entered a tree jungle, more open, which continues till 10h. 30m. The village Kalay-Book, of ten houses, from whence to this place, Nong-Keam, a muddy swamp of bad water, which we reached at 11h. 30m.; the jungle is again bamboos. We have seen no cultivation to-day, and both the small villages we have passed clear the jungle (which only grows on grounds slightly elevated), for their paddy, and do not cultivate the plains which have too much water on them ; one in this vicinity is only now becoming dry. The people had been employed in taking fish left in the mud, and appear to have been very successful ; at 9h. 30m. we passed the Nakan (Yenkabot) of Nak-outcha-thee in the jungle ; he said he had been sent by the Myo-won to see to my provisions, and that the people did not take me by the western road, on which water is very scarce at this season ; he came up the river, which is distant east six or seven hours march. The people of the village (Kalay-Book) where he slept last night, were obliged to furnish him with a large portion of their fish. Weather exceedingly hot, thermometer at 2 P.M. 130° in the sun. The elephants did not come up till 3 P.M.

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